

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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TITLE: DECOY WITH MOVING BODY PARTS

SPECIFICATIONBACKGROUND OF THE INVENTIONFIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to decoys, specifically to animated decoys capable of realistic body part movement. More particularly, the present invention relates to decoys capable of realistic body part movement, wherein a body part is balanced such that a wind causes the body part to move in a realistic manner.

RELATED ART

Decoys are used by hunters to attract prey. A turkey decoy will attract other turkeys. Likewise, a deer decoy will attract deer. The more realistic a decoy, the more likely it is to attract its own species or a predator. Decoys are well known in the prior art. Previous attempts to create a realistic decoys include:

Ninegar, U.S. Patent No.5,613,317, discloses wildfowl decoy that moves in response to wind. The device has a body and a head and a flexible neck connecting the head with the body. The impact of wind on the head and neck causes the neck to move. The neck may be constructed of a spring covered with material.

Sroka, U.S. Patent No. 5,570,531, discloses a decoy having a body, a head and a neck with a flexible connector attaching the head to the body. The connector is bendable and the impact of wind on the head and neck causes the connector to flex. The connector can be used with different types of decoys and can be inserted in varied depths into the neck to achieve various effects.

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Johnson, U.S. Patent No. 5,515,637, discloses a decoy that is moveable by wind. The device includes a rod that extends into the body of the decoy and can be pushed into the ground to support the decoy. The bird is free to rotate about the rod when the wind blows. A helical spring may be formed within the rod or interconnected with the rod to re-store the decoy to a central position and to allow the decoy to tilt.

Heiges, U.S. Patent No. 5,279,063, discloses a decoy with a flexible neck. The neck can be positioned to a desired location with respect to the body and maintained in such position. The neck may be maintained in a rigid position or it may be allowed to rock.

Lanius, U.S. Patent No. 5,274,942, discloses a decoy having a pivotally mounted head interconnected with a weight inside the body. The weight normally biases the head to a raised position. A string may be interconnected with the weight to allow for the manual movement of the head and neck.

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Gazalski, U.S. Patent No. 5,231,780, discloses a decoy with rod-like wing supports rotatably mounted to the body which can be operated by pulling a string interconnected therewith. By pulling the string, the wings are moved in a realistic flapping manner. Additionally, the neck and head of the decoy are rotatable and interconnected with the pull string such that pulling the pull string actually is moving the head of the decoy.

Balmer, U.S. Patent No. 5,191,730, discloses a wing attachment for a bird decoy comprising a flexible material which can be attached to the body of the decoy with velcro. Wind blowing against the flexible material causes movement thereof simulating movement of the decoys wings.

Peterson, U.S. Patent No. 5,144,764, discloses a decoy with a pair of flexible wings and body. The wings fluctuate in response to air flow. A portion of the body comprises a wind sock to orient the decoy to face the wind.

Gagnon, Sr., U.S. Patent No. 4,893,428, discloses a decoy having a fin positioned at the tail to act as a rudder to maintain the decoy in position facing the wind.

Nelson, et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,651,457, discloses a weather vane-type rotatable decoy having a rigid body that can rotate about a rod that can be stuck into the ground at one end to support the decoy.

Caccamo, U.S. Patent No. 3,736,688, discloses a decoy with moveable, flexible arms which can pivot about a rod to face the wind and which can lock from side to side.

Carlson, U.S. Patent No. 3,435,550, discloses a decoy having a spring in each wing and may be actuated by a pull string and a swivel mounted in the tail.

Smith, U.S. Patent No. 325,617, discloses a the ornamental design of a deer tail decoy.

Davis, U.S. Patent No. 5,636,466, discloses an animal decoy apparatus.

Denny, et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,289,654, discloses an animated wildfowl decoy.

Payne, et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,852,288, discloses an articulated wild game decoy.

McKinney, U.S. Patent No. 4,965,953, discloses a remote controlled turkey decoy.

However, one major drawback with the prior art is that many of the decoys in the prior art require human operation to move a body part of the decoy, such as by the use of a string. This puts the hunter at a major disadvantage in hunting his or her prey. A hunter would better able to hunt his or her prey if he or she had both hands on his or her weapon and kept still, rather than using one hand to move the string or other device to animate the decoy.

Another drawback of the prior art is that even when the decoy does not require human operation to move its head, tail or other body part, movement is usually limited to only up and down motions. This restriction to only vertical body part movement makes the decoy less effective because it does not simulate the natural movement of the animal the decoy is supposed to imitate. The result is prey is less likely to be attracted than by a realistic moving decoy.

Another way of making a decoy, as disclosed in the prior art, is to include electronic controls. However, such electronic controls are frowned upon hunters and are generally not allowed by hunting associations and/or state laws.

Additionally, decoys can be used to scare away undesired animals. A hawk, cat, owl, etc. are examples of such a decoys. Like decoys for attracting prey, the decoys for scaring away animals work better if they similar to the natural movement of real animals. Additionally, decoys can be used for ornaments in such places as gardens.

Accordingly, what is needed, and has not heretofore been developed, is a realistic decoy that simulates realistic movement of the animal, and which movement is caused by the naturally occurring wind at the location that the decoy is to be used.

OBJECTS AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Accordingly, it is a principle object of the present invention to provide a decoy in which the head and/or tail of the decoy is able to move both horizontally and vertically without human intervention, but rather from just a slight wind.

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It is another object of the present invention to provide a decoy in which the moving body part is balanced so the body part moves naturally.

It is an additional object of the present invention to provide a decoy wherein a body part is balanced for movement by a counterweight attached to the body part.

It is even a further object of the present invention wherein a counterweight is interconnected with a moving body part by an arm.

It is even a further object of the present invention to position a counterweight for balancing a moving body part, in the body housing of the decoy.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a decoy with moving body part wherein the body part is capable of movement in vertical and horizontal directions.

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It is even another object of the present invention to provide a decoy wherein a hook extends from the body housing, and the head and neck of the decoy has a loop extending therefrom, to hang the body and neck from the housing.

5 It is another object of the present invention to be able to move more than one body part simultaneously, such as a head and a tail of a decoy.

10 It is yet another object of the present invention to have support means to support the decoy in a desired location and also to provide for additional movement of the decoy. Specifically, the support means could allow the decoy to move in a plurality of directions.

15 It is still a further object of the present invention to provide a wide variety of animated realistic looking decoys such as turkeys, deers, hawks, owls, cats, foxes, and wolves (any animal that is needed to be attracted, lured, hunted or scared away).

20 Broadly stated, the decoy of the present invention comprises a body housing having a front and a rear end, a neck interconnectable with the front end of the body housing, and a head interconnected with the neck. A hook is interconnected with the body housing and a corresponding loop is formed on the neck. The loop can be engaged with the hook to hang the neck and head from the body. A counterweight extends from the neck in the opposite direction of the head to within the body housing to counterbalance the head and neck. The head and neck are free to move up and down and side to side, such movement being caused by naturally occurring wind. A tail can be similarly attached to the body housing for movement by wind.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Referring to **FIG. 1**, a decoy is generally indicated at **10**. The decoy shown is a turkey decoy. However, this invention applies to any other decoy such as a deer, owl, fox, wolf decoy, etc. The decoy **10** includes a body housing **20** and a head assembly **50**. The body housing **20** is hollow on the interior and is shaped and decorated with feathers on the exterior to resemble a turkey from the outside. The head assembly **50** includes a neck **52** and a head **53**. The body housing **20** includes a throat area **22** at a front end **23** and a tail **26** at a rear end **27** of the body housing **20**. The head assembly **50** is connected to the body housing **20** preferably by a hook and loop assembly **36** as illustrated in **FIG. 1**. This hook and loop assembly **36** consists of a hook **24** located on an upper portion of the throat area **22** of the body housing **20** and a support loop **54** extending from an upper side of the neck **52**. In use, the support loop **54** is positioned on the hook **24** to hang the head assembly **50** from the body housing **20**. The head assembly **50** can be attached to the body housing **20** in a feeding position with the head extending toward the ground, or in an upright position with the head extending outward and upward. A portion of the neck **52** extends into the body housing **20** through the throat area **22** of the body housing **20**. Importantly, the hook and loop assembly **36** allows for freedom of movement of the head assembly **50** with respect to the body housing **20**. Thus, the head assembly **50** can move vertically and horizontally with respect to the body housing **20**. Attachment of the head assembly **50** to the body housing **20** in any other way which provides similar freedom of movement is also considered within the scope of the present invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Other important objects and features of the invention will be apparent from the following Detailed Description of the Invention taken in connection with the accompanying drawings in which:

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FIG. 1 is a side schematic view of a decoy of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a side schematic view of another embodiment of the decoy of **FIG. 1**.

FIG. 3 is a side schematic view of another embodiment of the decoy of **FIG. 1**.

FIGS. 4A and 4B are perspective views of other embodiments of the decoy of **FIG. 3**.

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A counterweight 58 is provided within the body housing 20. The counterweight 58 is connected to the neck 52 of the turkey decoy 10 by an arm 56. The counterweight 58 is sized and positioned to balance the head assembly 50 on the body housing 20 and to allow for movement of the head assembly 50 with respect to the body housing 20 to simulate movement of a body part of an animal.

FIG. 1 also illustrates a support stake 40 for supporting the decoy 10. The support stake 40 has a support spring 42 attached to a upper end of the support stake 40. The upper end of the support stake 40 extends through a torso aperture 30 in the body housing 20. The support stake 40 is connected to a seat 32 which is attached to an upper part of the body housing 20 within the body housing 20. The stake 40 may be interconnected with seat 32 by the support spring 42. The bottom end of the support stake 40 is pointed and can be pushed into the ground at a desired location to support the decoy 10 at such location. The support spring 42 allows for additional movement of the decoy 10 caused by wind. Other support means as are known in the art may also be used, and can be connected to the body housing 20.

In use, external stimuli such as a slight breeze causes the head assembly 50 of the turkey decoy 10 in FIG. 1 to move up and down and side to side as permitted by the hook and loop assembly 36. The counterweight 58 balances the neck 52 in a neutral position allowing the natural movement of head assembly 50 to continue once movement has been initiated, thereby attracting animals, in this case turkeys. It is preferred that the head assembly 50 be made of light weight material so that only minimal weight will be required to balance the head assembly 50 in a neutral

position. As such, even the slightest breeze of wind will cause the head, or other movable body part, to move. However, different head assemblies with varying weight may be used to account for the specific weather conditions.

5 The present invention also provides for the simulation of moving feathers. In **FIG. 1**, the feathers on the torso **28** may be made to “strut” or stand up preferably through the use of sheet plastic, which can be blown up by wind. This adds a more realistic appearance to the decoy **10** thereby being more attractive to turkeys.

10 Another type of attachment means for connecting the head assembly **50** of the decoy **10** to the body housing **20** is a pivot assembly **60** to pivotally connect the head assembly **50** to the body housing **20** as shown in **FIG. 2**. The pivot assembly **60** comprises a pivot pin **64** which extends through corresponding apertures in opposite sides of the throat area **22** of the body housing **20** and the neck **52**. This pivot assembly **60** allows for the head assembly **50** to pivot with respect to the
15 body housing **20** to simulate movement of a decoy’s body part. In use, the decoy **10** illustrated in **FIG. 2**, like the decoy **10** in **FIG. 1**, has its movement initiated by external stimuli such as wind.

20 Referring now to **FIG. 3**, another embodiment of a decoy according to the present invention is shown. Specifically, in **FIG. 3**, a deer decoy is generally indicated at **110**. In this embodiment, like reference numerals refer to like elements of the previous embodiments. The decoy **110** includes a body housing **120** and a head assembly **150**. The body housing **120** is hollow on the inside and is made to resemble a deer from the outside. The head assembly **150** includes a neck **152** and a head

153. The body housing 120 includes a throat area 122 at a front end 123 and a tail 126 at a rear end 127 of the body housing 120. The head assembly 150 of the decoy 110 is connected to the body housing 120 preferably by the hook and loop assembly 136 described above and illustrated in FIG.

1. The hook and loop assembly 136 comprises a hook 124 located on an upper portion of the throat area 122 of the body housing 120 and a support loop 154 located on an upper portion of the neck 152. As shown in FIG. 3, an additional support loop 254 may also be provided on the tail 126 of the decoy 110 and an additional hook 224 may also be provided on the rear end 127 of the body housing 110. As such, the tail 126 hangs on the body housing 120.

In use, the support loop 154 is positioned on the hook 124 to hang the head assembly 150 from the body housing 120. A portion of the neck 152 extends into the body housing 120. In addition, as shown in FIG. 3, the rear support loop 254 on the tail 126 is positioned on the rear hook 224 located on the rear end 127 of the body housing 120 of the decoy 110 to hang the tail 126 from the body housing 120. The hook and loop assembly 136, as shown in FIG. 3, allows the head assembly 150 and the tail 126 to move both vertically and horizontally with respect to the body housing 120. Attachment of the head assembly 150 and tail 126 to the body housing 120 in any other way which provides similar freedom of movement, such as by a pivot means, is also considered within the scope of the present invention.

A counterweight 158, as with the decoy 10 in FIGS. 1 and 2, is also provided within the body housing 120 of the deer decoy 110. The counterweight 158 is connected to the neck 152 by an arm 156 attached to the counterweight 158. A counterweight 258 may also be connected to the tail

126 of the deer decoy by an arm 256. The counterweight 158 or 258 balances the body part to which it is attached to on the body housing and allows for movement of the body part with respect to the body housing 120 to simulate movement of an animal's body part. Accordingly, a slight wind causes the head 150 and/or tail 126 to move with respect to the body housing 120.

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Referring now to **FIGS. 4A** and **4B**, another embodiment of the decoy shown in **FIG. 3** is shown. In this embodiment, the deer decoy generally indicated at 210, is provided with a body housing 220. A counterweight 358 is interconnected with the neck 252 or tail 226 to balance the body part on the body housing to which the body part is attached and which allows for movement of the body part with respect to the body housing to simulate movement of an animal's body part. A slight wind causes the head 250 and/or tail 226 to move with respect to the body housing 220. Importantly, the tail 226 and/or neck 252 can be attached to the body housing 220 by means of a hook and loop system and/or by means of a pivot system. As shown in **FIG. 4A**, it is preferable for the tail to move from side to side in a direction shown by arrow D about pivot point 357.

Having thus described the invention in detail, it is to be understood that the foregoing description is not intended to limit the spirit and scope thereof. What is desired to be protected by Letters Patent is set forth in the appended claims.